



Implementing Game-Based Learning via Kahoot to Stimulate English Learning Enthusiasm Among Students at Lemah Kembar Elementary School

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Abstract

The integration of digital learning technologies transformed English language teaching by providing interactive, student-centered experiences. Although Kahoot! gained attention as a game-based learning application to increase engagement, limited qualitative studies explored its impact on English learning enthusiasm among elementary students, especially in resource-limited Indonesian public schools. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the implementation of Kahoot! in stimulating English learning enthusiasm among third-grade students at SD Negeri Lemahkembar. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected from 32 students and one teacher through observations, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that Kahoot! significantly increased learning motivation by creating an enjoyable and competitive atmosphere. Furthermore, it encouraged active classroom participation and improved the understanding of English materials through immediate feedback. Finally, students demonstrated positive adaptation to digital learning environments despite limited prior experience. The study concluded that Kahoot! was an effective platform for enhancing elementary students' enthusiasm, promoting participation, conceptual understanding, and digital literacy.

Keywords:

Kahoot!; game-based learning; English learning enthusiasm; elementary school; qualitative study

INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most essential international languages in the twenty-first century. It functions not only as a medium of global communication but also as a gateway to science, technology, education, and international collaboration. Consequently, introducing English at the primary school level is increasingly regarded as an important investment in developing children's future academic and professional competencies. Young learners generally possess a high level of curiosity and cognitive flexibility, enabling them to acquire foreign languages more naturally than older learners. Therefore, providing meaningful English learning experiences from an early age is expected to foster positive attitudes toward language learning and establish a strong linguistic foundation for higher educational levels (Putri & Efendi, 2023).

Despite the growing recognition of English education in primary schools, many elementary classrooms continue to experience difficulties in maintaining students'

learning enthusiasm. English is often perceived by young learners as a difficult subject because it introduces unfamiliar vocabulary, pronunciation patterns, and sentence structures. In many classrooms, learning activities still rely heavily on teacher-centered instruction, textbook-based explanations, and repetitive exercises. Such instructional practices frequently limit opportunities for active student participation and reduce students' intrinsic motivation to learn. As a result, classroom interaction becomes passive, students easily lose concentration, and learning outcomes fail to reach their optimum potential (Milah et al., 2024).

Learning enthusiasm is widely acknowledged as one of the strongest determinants of successful language acquisition. Students who demonstrate high learning motivation are generally more willing to participate in classroom activities, complete learning tasks, interact with teachers and peers, and overcome learning difficulties. Conversely, students with low enthusiasm tend to become passive recipients of information and rarely engage in meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, improving students' learning interest should become a central concern in English language teaching, particularly at the elementary school level where learners are still developing their academic habits and attitudes toward education.

Recent developments in educational technology have provided teachers with various opportunities to transform conventional classroom instruction into more interactive learning experiences. The rapid advancement of digital technology has encouraged educators to integrate innovative learning media that accommodate the characteristics of today's digital-native learners. Rather than functioning merely as supplementary teaching aids, digital learning platforms have gradually become pedagogical tools capable of promoting collaboration, immediate feedback, and student-centered learning. One instructional approach receiving increasing scholarly attention is **Game-Based Learning (GBL)**, which incorporates game elements into educational activities to improve learners' motivation, participation, and academic achievement.

Among various Game-Based Learning platforms, **Kahoot!** has become one of the most widely implemented digital learning applications in schools around the world. Kahoot! enables teachers to design interactive quizzes that combine competition, instant feedback, colorful visual displays, and classroom collaboration within a single learning environment. Previous studies have consistently reported that Kahoot! contributes positively to students' motivation, engagement, classroom participation, and learning achievement across different educational settings (Boden & Hart, 2018; Rayan & Watted, 2024). The platform transforms assessment activities into enjoyable learning experiences, allowing students to receive immediate feedback while simultaneously encouraging healthy competition among classmates.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the educational benefits of Kahoot! in language learning. For instance, Rayan and Watted (2024) reported that gamified learning significantly enhanced elementary students' motivation and classroom participation. Likewise, Akkoyunlu and Gündüz (2019) found that Kahoot! encouraged greater student interaction while reducing anxiety during classroom activities. Other studies have also highlighted that digital game-based learning supports learners' cognitive engagement by facilitating immediate feedback, collaborative learning, and active participation throughout instructional sessions. Collectively, these findings indicate that Kahoot! possesses considerable potential as an innovative instructional medium for English language education.

However, existing studies still reveal several important research gaps. First, the majority of previous investigations have predominantly employed quantitative approaches emphasizing statistical measurements of learning outcomes, while relatively few studies have explored students' learning enthusiasm through in-depth qualitative investigation. Second, most published studies have been conducted in urban schools or

educational institutions with relatively adequate technological infrastructure. Consequently, limited empirical evidence is available regarding the implementation of Kahoot! in public elementary schools located in semi-rural areas where digital learning resources remain relatively limited. Third, previous studies have primarily focused on academic achievement or test performance, whereas fewer investigations have comprehensively examine how Kahoot! influences students' motivation, classroom interaction, learning confidence, and behavioral engagement simultaneously during English learning activities.

Considering these limitations, further qualitative investigation is required to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning experiences when Kahoot! is implemented in elementary English classrooms. Exploring classroom interactions through observation, interviews, and documentation allows researchers to identify not only learning outcomes but also the social and psychological processes underlying students' enthusiasm for learning English. Such understanding is particularly important because learning enthusiasm constitutes a multidimensional construct involving emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement throughout instructional activities.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive qualitative exploration of the implementation of Kahoot! within an Indonesian public elementary school context where digital learning technologies have not yet become routine classroom practice. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on academic achievement using quantitative methods, this research investigates students' learning enthusiasm through thematic analysis by integrating classroom observations, teacher interviews, and supporting documentation. Furthermore, the study provides contextual evidence regarding how Kahoot! facilitates learning motivation, classroom participation, understanding of English materials, and students' adaptation to digital learning environments within a resource-limited educational setting.

Based on these considerations, **this study aims** to explore how the implementation of Kahoot! stimulates English learning enthusiasm among third-grade students at SD Negeri Lemahkembar, Probolinggo Regency. Specifically, the research seeks to (1) identify changes in students' learning motivation after the implementation of Kahoot!, (2) examine students' classroom participation during game-based learning activities, (3) investigate how Kahoot! supports students' understanding of English learning materials, and (4) analyze students' adaptation toward the use of digital learning media in elementary English classrooms. It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute both theoretically and practically by enriching the literature on Game-Based Learning and providing empirical recommendations for elementary school teachers seeking to create more engaging English learning environments.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore how the implementation of Kahoot! stimulated English learning enthusiasm among elementary school students. A qualitative approach was selected because the primary objective of the study was not to measure students' achievement statistically but to understand their learning experiences, classroom behaviors, and responses during the implementation of game-based learning. According to qualitative research principles, researchers seek to interpret participants' experiences within their natural settings while maintaining the authenticity of classroom interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The descriptive qualitative approach enabled the researchers to examine the learning process comprehensively by observing how students interacted with the Kahoot! platform, how they responded to classroom activities, and how teachers perceived changes in students' motivation and participation. Rather than emphasizing numerical

outcomes, this study focused on identifying patterns, themes, and meanings emerging from classroom observations and interview data.

The implementation of Kahoot! was carried out during English learning sessions in which students completed vocabulary recognition, simple sentence construction, and picture-based quizzes using the application. Throughout these learning activities, the researchers documented students' behavioral changes, classroom engagement, and interaction patterns to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the learning process.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at **SD Negeri Lemahkembar**, Sumberasih District, Probolinggo Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The school was selected purposively because it had recently begun integrating digital learning media into classroom instruction, making it an appropriate context for investigating the implementation of Kahoot! in elementary education.

The participants consisted of **32 third-grade students** aged between **8 and 9 years**, together with **one English teacher** who had experience teaching English at the elementary level. The students represented diverse academic abilities, including high-, medium-, and low-achieving learners, thereby allowing the researchers to observe various learning responses during classroom activities.

Purposive sampling was employed because the selected participants possessed characteristics relevant to the research objectives. Third-grade students were considered appropriate participants since they were in the early stages of foreign language acquisition and demonstrated considerable curiosity toward interactive learning activities. At this developmental stage, children generally respond positively to visual stimulation, games, and collaborative learning, making them suitable participants for investigating Game-Based Learning implementation.

The English teacher served as the key informant because of his or her direct involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating English instruction using Kahoot!. The teacher also provided valuable information regarding students' learning behaviors before and after the implementation of the application.

Data Collection Techniques

The researchers acted as the primary research instrument throughout the study. In qualitative research, researchers function as the main instrument responsible for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data directly from the research setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To enhance data accuracy, several supporting instruments were also employed.

a. Observation Sheet. Observation was conducted during English learning activities using a structured observation guide developed from indicators of learning enthusiasm. The observation focused on several aspects, including: students' attention during learning activities; active participation in classroom discussions; willingness to answer questions; interaction with peers and teachers; enthusiasm while participating in Kahoot! quizzes; confidence in responding to learning tasks. Field notes were written immediately after each observation session to ensure that important classroom events were accurately documented.

b. Semi-Structured Interview Guide. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teacher after the completion of classroom observations. This interview format allowed the researcher to prepare guiding questions while maintaining flexibility to explore emerging issues during the conversation. The interview focused on several topics: students' learning motivation before using Kahoot!; observed behavioral changes after implementation; advantages of Kahoot! during English instruction; challenges encountered during classroom implementation; teacher perceptions regarding student

engagement. The interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission and later transcribed for thematic analysis.

c. Documentation. Documentation served as supporting evidence to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Documents collected included: lesson plans (RPP/Teaching Module); classroom photographs; screenshots of Kahoot! activities; students' quiz scores; attendance records; researcher field notes. The documentation was used to triangulate observational and interview findings, ensuring greater consistency across different data sources.

Data Analysis

Data collection was conducted over four consecutive English learning meetings during the second semester of the academic year. Each meeting lasted approximately 70 minutes. The research procedure consisted of four stages. **First**, the researchers obtained permission from the school principal and coordinated the research schedule with the English teacher. **Second**, preliminary classroom observations were conducted to identify students' initial learning behaviors before Kahoot! implementation. **Third**, Kahoot! was integrated into English learning activities. Students participated individually using smartphones provided by the school or shared devices under teacher supervision. During these sessions, the researchers observed students' classroom engagement, communication patterns, emotional responses, and participation. **Finally**, interviews were conducted with the English teacher after the learning sessions had been completed. Supporting documents were collected simultaneously to strengthen research findings.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using **Thematic Analysis** following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This analytical approach enables researchers to identify recurring patterns and construct meaningful themes from qualitative data. The analysis involved six stages.

a. Familiarization with Data. All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. Observation notes and documentation were repeatedly reviewed to enable the researchers to become familiar with the overall data.

b. Initial Coding. Meaningful statements related to students' learning enthusiasm were coded systematically. Similar responses were grouped under preliminary categories such as learning motivation, classroom participation, confidence, collaboration, enjoyment, and digital adaptation.

c. Theme Development. The preliminary categories were compared and synthesized into broader themes representing the main findings of the study. Four dominant themes emerged: Increased learning motivation; Active classroom participation; Improved understanding of English materials; Positive adaptation toward digital learning.

d. Reviewing Themes. Each theme was reviewed by comparing interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation to ensure consistency across different data sources.

e. Defining and Naming Themes. After refinement, each theme was clearly defined to describe how Kahoot! influenced students' learning enthusiasm during English instruction.

f. Report Writing. Finally, the themes were interpreted using relevant literature on Game-Based Learning and English language teaching to construct comprehensive research findings.

Data Analysis

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study adopted four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. **Credibility** was achieved through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and

supporting documentation. Prolonged engagement during multiple classroom meetings also enabled the researchers to gain a deeper understanding of students' learning behaviors. **Transferability** was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and learning activities so that readers may determine the applicability of the findings to similar educational settings. **Dependability** was maintained by documenting each stage of data collection and analysis systematically, creating an audit trail that enhances methodological transparency. **Confirmability** was strengthened through reflective field notes and continuous comparison between empirical findings and supporting evidence, thereby minimizing researcher bias.

Data Analysis

Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school administration. The English teacher voluntarily agreed to participate after receiving information regarding the objectives and procedures of the study. Students' identities were kept confidential throughout the research process, and all data were reported anonymously. The collected information was used solely for academic purposes, ensuring that participants' privacy and well-being were fully protected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The analysis of classroom observations, teacher interviews, and supporting documentation revealed that implementing Kahoot! significantly influenced students' enthusiasm for learning English. The findings indicate that the application not only increased students' motivation but also changed classroom interaction patterns, improved participation, facilitated better understanding of learning materials, and encouraged students to adapt confidently to digital learning environments. Four major themes emerged from the thematic analysis.

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings

Theme	Evidence from Observation	Interview Findings	Documentation
Increased learning motivation	Students actively volunteered to answer questions and showed excitement during quizzes.	Teacher observed students becoming more enthusiastic than during conventional lessons.	Kahoot! scores and classroom photographs.
Active classroom participation	Nearly all students participated during quiz sessions and classroom discussions.	Teacher reported increased confidence among previously passive students.	Observation notes and attendance records.
Improved understanding of English materials	Students corrected mistakes immediately after receiving feedback.	Teacher noticed faster vocabulary retention.	Quiz results and screenshots of Kahoot! feedback.
Positive adaptation to digital learning	Students quickly learned how to operate Kahoot! independently.	Teacher stated that only minimal guidance was required.	Classroom documentation and researcher field notes.

The four themes presented above were consistently identified through triangulation of classroom observations, interview data, and supporting documentation. The integration of multiple data sources strengthened the credibility of the findings and demonstrated that students' positive responses toward Kahoot! occurred consistently throughout the learning process rather than appearing only during isolated classroom activities.

Increased Learning Motivation

One of the most prominent findings of this study was the substantial increase in students' motivation during English learning activities. Classroom observations indicated that students demonstrated considerably greater enthusiasm after Kahoot! was introduced into the instructional process. Unlike previous lessons, in which several students tended to remain passive or easily distracted, almost all learners paid close attention to the teacher's instructions and eagerly anticipated each quiz session.

During observation sessions, students frequently expressed excitement by cheering for their classmates, applauding high scores, and encouraging one another to complete each question successfully. Such behaviors rarely appeared during conventional classroom activities. The competitive yet enjoyable atmosphere created by Kahoot! transformed the learning environment into a more dynamic and engaging experience.

The English teacher confirmed this observation during the interview:

"Before using Kahoot!, some students often lost concentration after ten or fifteen minutes of learning. However, once Kahoot! was introduced, they became much more enthusiastic and remained focused until the lesson ended."

Similarly, another interview excerpt highlighted the positive emotional atmosphere generated by the application:

"Students no longer viewed English as a difficult subject. Instead, they looked forward to participating because the learning activities felt more like playing a game."

Observation notes also revealed that students demonstrated higher persistence when answering difficult questions. Rather than giving up immediately after making mistakes, they became increasingly motivated to improve their scores during subsequent quiz rounds. This behavioral change suggests that the gamification features embedded in Kahoot!, including points, rankings, and immediate feedback, successfully encouraged students to remain engaged throughout the lesson.

Supporting documentation, particularly screenshots of Kahoot! scoreboards, further illustrated students' willingness to compete in a healthy manner while maintaining positive classroom relationships.

Overall, these findings indicate that Kahoot! effectively enhanced students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by combining enjoyable learning activities with constructive competition.

Active Classroom Participation

The second major finding concerned the considerable improvement in classroom participation. Observation data demonstrated that students became noticeably more active during learning sessions utilizing Kahoot! compared with conventional instructional methods.

Before the implementation of Kahoot!, classroom interaction was largely dominated by the teacher. Only a small number of students regularly answered questions or volunteered to participate in classroom discussions. Following the introduction of Kahoot!, however, participation increased substantially across almost all students.

Throughout the observation period, students frequently raised their hands to ask questions, discussed possible answers with classmates, and voluntarily responded to the teacher's instructions. Students who had previously demonstrated limited participation gradually became more confident in expressing their ideas.

The English teacher explained:

"Several students who rarely answered questions before became surprisingly active during Kahoot! sessions. Even quieter students wanted to participate because everyone had the same opportunity to earn points."

Researchers also observed increased peer collaboration. Students often reminded each other to read questions carefully, celebrated classmates' achievements, and provided

encouragement following incorrect answers. Such interactions created a supportive learning environment while simultaneously maintaining healthy academic competition. Field notes further indicated that classroom management became easier because students remained focused on learning tasks instead of engaging in unrelated conversations.

Documentation in the form of classroom photographs also illustrated that nearly every student actively participated during quiz sessions. Students maintained visual attention toward the projected screen while simultaneously interacting through their individual devices.

These findings suggest that Kahoot! effectively promoted active learning by encouraging participation among both highly motivated students and those who had previously demonstrated limited classroom engagement.

Improved Understanding of English Learning Materials

The thematic analysis also revealed that Kahoot! contributed positively to students' comprehension of English learning materials.

Observation data showed that students became increasingly capable of identifying correct vocabulary, recognizing simple sentence structures, and remembering previously learned material after completing several Kahoot! activities. Immediate feedback enabled learners to recognize incorrect answers and understand the reasons behind their mistakes without waiting until the end of the lesson.

During interviews, the English teacher stated:

"Students remembered vocabulary more easily because every incorrect answer was immediately discussed. This helped them avoid repeating similar mistakes."

Researchers observed that students frequently compared their previous and current scores, reflecting on areas requiring improvement. Such behavior indicates the development of self-regulated learning, where students actively monitored their own learning progress.

Documentation also demonstrated gradual improvement in quiz performance throughout successive learning sessions. Although the purpose of this qualitative study was not statistical measurement, the teacher's classroom records indicated consistent improvement in students' overall performance.

Students also demonstrated greater confidence when answering oral questions after completing Kahoot! activities. This suggests that the application supported not only short-term engagement but also strengthened conceptual understanding through repetitive practice and immediate correction.

Overall, the integration of Kahoot! facilitated meaningful learning experiences by enabling students to learn from mistakes while maintaining high levels of engagement.

Positive Adaptation to Digital Learning

Another important finding was students' rapid adaptation to digital learning technology. Although most participants had relatively limited experience using educational applications, researchers observed that students quickly understood how to access quizzes, submit responses, and interpret feedback displayed by Kahoot!.

During the first learning session, several students required assistance logging into the application. However, by the second and third sessions, almost all participants operated the platform independently.

The teacher explained:

"Initially, I thought they would experience difficulties because this was their first time using Kahoot!. Surprisingly, they learned very quickly and even helped their classmates."

Observation notes also indicated that students rarely experienced technological anxiety. Instead, they perceived the application as enjoyable and intuitive.

Researchers additionally observed that students became increasingly confident using smartphones for educational purposes rather than merely for entertainment. This finding demonstrates that appropriately designed educational technology can contribute not only to academic learning but also to students' digital literacy development.

Supporting documentation, including classroom photographs and screenshots of Kahoot! activities, confirmed that students actively interacted with the platform throughout the learning sessions without experiencing significant technical difficulties.

Collectively, these findings suggest that elementary school students possess considerable potential to integrate digital learning technologies into classroom activities when teachers provide appropriate guidance and select applications that are developmentally suitable.

Across the four themes identified through thematic analysis, the findings consistently demonstrate that Kahoot! positively influenced English learning among third-grade students at SD Negeri Lemahkembar. Increased motivation, greater classroom participation, improved understanding of learning materials, and successful adaptation to digital learning environments emerged simultaneously throughout the implementation process. The convergence of evidence obtained from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and documentation strengthens the credibility of these findings and indicates that the positive impact of Kahoot! extended beyond temporary excitement toward meaningful improvements in students' overall learning engagement.

DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates that implementing Kahoot! as a Game-Based Learning (GBL) platform significantly enhanced elementary school students' enthusiasm for learning English. The findings indicate that the integration of gamified learning activities positively influenced students' motivation, classroom participation, understanding of learning materials, and adaptation to digital learning environments. Rather than functioning merely as an entertaining educational application, Kahoot! created a learning atmosphere that promoted active engagement and meaningful interaction throughout the instructional process. These findings suggest that technology-supported learning can become an effective pedagogical strategy for improving the quality of English instruction at the primary school level.

One of the most important findings concerns the considerable improvement in students' learning motivation. The classroom observations and interview data revealed that students became increasingly enthusiastic, attentive, and willing to participate after Kahoot! was introduced into English lessons. This improvement can be explained through the motivational characteristics embedded within gamification, including points, rankings, immediate feedback, and enjoyable competition. These elements encourage students to perceive learning as an engaging experience rather than as an obligatory academic task.

This finding supports the work of Rayan and Watted (2024), who reported that Kahoot! increased elementary students' motivation by creating enjoyable learning experiences and encouraging active classroom participation. Similarly, Boden and Hart (2018) argued that the immediate feedback provided by Kahoot! enables students to monitor their learning progress continuously while maintaining high levels of engagement. The consistency between the present findings and previous studies strengthens the argument that gamified learning environments contribute positively to students' intrinsic motivation regardless of educational context.

Nevertheless, this study extends previous research by demonstrating that the motivational impact of Kahoot! was observed even in a public elementary school with relatively limited technological infrastructure. Earlier investigations have frequently focused on schools with better access to digital facilities, whereas the present study

shows that meaningful technology integration remains possible in less technologically developed educational settings. Consequently, the effectiveness of Kahoot! depends not only on technological availability but also on teachers' ability to design interactive learning experiences.

Another important finding relates to students' active classroom participation. Before Kahoot! was implemented, classroom interaction tended to be dominated by the teacher, while only a limited number of students voluntarily answered questions or contributed to discussions. After the introduction of Kahoot!, however, nearly all students actively participated in classroom activities, discussed questions with peers, and demonstrated greater confidence in expressing their opinions.

This finding aligns with Archer et al. (2014), whose meta-analysis concluded that technology-supported learning environments generally increase student engagement by providing more opportunities for interaction and collaborative learning. Likewise, Akkoyunlu and Gündüz (2019) emphasized that Kahoot! encourages equal participation because every learner has the opportunity to contribute regardless of academic ability.

The present study further indicates that Kahoot! may reduce students' fear of making mistakes. During traditional lessons, several participants appeared reluctant to answer questions because they were concerned about giving incorrect responses. However, within the Kahoot! environment, mistakes were perceived as part of the learning process rather than as failures. The immediate feedback system enabled students to recognize and correct misunderstandings without experiencing excessive anxiety. This finding supports the principles of constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge develops through active participation, reflection, and continuous feedback rather than passive information transfer.

The findings also demonstrate that Kahoot! positively influenced students' understanding of English learning materials. Rather than memorizing vocabulary mechanically, students actively engaged with learning content through repeated practice and immediate corrective feedback. Observation data showed that students remembered vocabulary more effectively, recognized sentence patterns more accurately, and became increasingly confident when answering oral questions after completing Kahoot! activities.

These findings are consistent with Hasanah Lubis et al. (2023), who reported that interactive learning media contribute significantly to improving students' conceptual understanding because learners receive continuous opportunities to practice and evaluate their knowledge. Similarly, Plump and LaRosa (2017) argued that Kahoot! transforms assessment into a formative learning activity by allowing students to identify misconceptions immediately after answering each question.

The improvement in conceptual understanding observed in this study also supports the cognitive theory of multimedia learning proposed by Mayer (2021), which suggests that meaningful learning occurs when learners actively process verbal and visual information simultaneously. Kahoot! integrates text, images, colors, sound effects, and immediate feedback within one instructional platform, enabling students to process information through multiple cognitive channels. Such multimodal learning experiences are particularly appropriate for elementary school learners whose attention spans are relatively limited.

Another noteworthy finding concerns students' rapid adaptation to digital learning technologies. Although most participants had limited previous experience using educational applications, they quickly learned how to operate Kahoot! independently after only a few learning sessions. This finding suggests that elementary school students possess considerable digital learning potential when educational technologies are designed according to their developmental characteristics.

The present findings support previous research indicating that digital-native learners generally adapt rapidly to interactive educational technologies (Prensky, 2001). However, this study contributes additional evidence by demonstrating that digital adaptation is not determined solely by students' technological experience but also by the usability and accessibility of the learning platform. Kahoot!'s simple interface, visual design, and intuitive navigation enabled students to focus on learning tasks rather than technical procedures.

The teacher's role also emerged as a critical factor influencing the successful implementation of Kahoot!. Although the application provides numerous interactive features, its effectiveness depends substantially on teachers' instructional planning and classroom management. Throughout the observations, the English teacher successfully integrated Kahoot! into lesson objectives rather than using it merely as entertainment. Questions were carefully aligned with learning outcomes, and feedback sessions were conducted after each quiz to reinforce students' understanding.

This finding highlights that educational technology should complement pedagogical practice rather than replace teachers' professional expertise. Technology becomes meaningful only when teachers facilitate discussion, provide clarification, and encourage reflective learning after students complete digital activities. Therefore, successful Game-Based Learning requires the integration of technological knowledge, pedagogical competence, and appropriate instructional content.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to the growing literature on Game-Based Learning by providing qualitative evidence regarding the mechanisms through which Kahoot! enhances learning enthusiasm. While many previous studies have primarily measured academic achievement quantitatively, the present study demonstrates that increased learning enthusiasm develops through interconnected processes involving emotional engagement, active participation, cognitive reinforcement, and positive classroom interaction. These dimensions collectively shape students' willingness to participate in English learning activities.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide valuable implications for elementary school teachers and educational institutions. Teachers may consider integrating Kahoot! not only as an assessment tool but also as an instructional strategy capable of promoting collaborative learning and sustaining students' motivation throughout classroom instruction. Schools should also support teachers by providing adequate technological facilities and professional development opportunities related to digital pedagogy. Such initiatives may facilitate broader implementation of innovative learning strategies across different educational contexts.

Despite these positive findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study involved only one elementary school and one classroom, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. Second, the research focused primarily on qualitative exploration and therefore did not statistically measure learning achievement. Future studies may combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine both students' learning experiences and academic performance more comprehensively. Researchers may also investigate the long-term impact of Kahoot! implementation across different grade levels, subject areas, and technological environments.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that Kahoot! represents more than a digital quiz application. When implemented through appropriate pedagogical strategies, it functions as an effective learning medium capable of transforming classroom interaction, strengthening students' motivation, supporting conceptual understanding, and encouraging positive attitudes toward English learning. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating educational technology into elementary English instruction

while maintaining the central role of teachers in facilitating meaningful learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the implementation of Kahoot! as a Game-Based Learning platform to stimulate English learning enthusiasm among third-grade students at SD Negeri Lemahkembar, Probolinggo Regency. Based on classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, the findings demonstrate that Kahoot! positively influenced multiple dimensions of students' learning experiences.

First, the implementation of Kahoot! significantly increased students' learning motivation by creating enjoyable, competitive, and interactive classroom activities. Students demonstrated greater attention, persistence, and willingness to participate throughout the learning process. Second, Kahoot! encouraged broader classroom participation by providing equal opportunities for all learners to contribute regardless of their previous academic performance or confidence level. Third, the platform facilitated better understanding of English learning materials through immediate feedback, repeated practice, and interactive assessment activities. Finally, students adapted rapidly to the digital learning environment despite having relatively limited previous experience with educational technology, indicating that elementary school learners are capable of integrating digital learning tools when appropriate pedagogical support is provided.

Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on Game-Based Learning by demonstrating that learning enthusiasm develops through interconnected emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and technological dimensions rather than through motivation alone. Practically, the findings suggest that teachers should integrate interactive digital media into English instruction to promote student-centered learning while maintaining pedagogical guidance throughout classroom activities.

Although the study provides valuable insights, it is limited to one research site and a relatively small number of participants. Future research is therefore recommended to involve broader educational settings, different grade levels, and mixed-method research designs to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term effectiveness of Game-Based Learning in elementary English education.

In conclusion, Kahoot! represents an effective pedagogical innovation capable of enhancing English learning enthusiasm among elementary school students. When combined with appropriate instructional strategies and supportive classroom environments, the platform contributes not only to academic engagement but also to the development of positive learning experiences that may foster students' long-term interest in learning English.

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